



Borough of Pottstown

*Borough Hall, 100 East High Street
Pottstown, Pennsylvania 19464-9525*

POTTSTOWN BOROUGH PLANNING COMMISSION

Pottstown Borough Hall Council Chamber Room
100 E. High St Pottstown, PA 19464
Wednesday, April 18, 2018 7:00pm

Present Members: Deborah Penrod, Chair
Dan Weand, Jim Derr, Dennis Arms and Brian Hydier

Absent Members: None

Additional Present: Charles Garner, Borough Solicitor
Brian Olszak, Montgomery County Planning Commission
Robin Youmans, PE, Cedarville Engineering Group
Stephanie Drobins, Licensing & Inspections Inspector

Meeting called to order by Ms. Penrod at 7:02pm

Approval of Minutes: The February 21, 2018 planning commission meeting minutes were accepted with amendments. Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Derr seconded. Mr. Arms abstained. Motion carried.

728 High St, parking lot improvements: An amended plan was submitted on April 9, 2018. No review letters are available at this time. To be heard at the May 16, 2018 meeting.

828 N Hanover St, subdivision: Jeremy Hoagland from The Crossroads Group LLC and Scott Exley were present on behalf of the applicant. The lot is currently a defunct church and parsonage (single family dwelling). The purpose of the requested subdivision is to divide the lot so each building has its own lot. There are no proposed changes.

- Cedarville Engineering Group review letter dated March 13, 2018:
 - Waivers requested for:
 - Point #1 / Point #2 / Point #6 – survey was no done due to no proposed improvements or use change.
 - Point #9 / Point #10 / Point #11 / Point #12 / Point #13 – Per Mr. Weand, a fee in lieu of open space and required trees is normally assessed but applicant is requesting a waiver of the fees on all points.
 - Point #14 – per Mr. Exley both tenants have been co-existing for many years and have a mutual agreement that the breezeway between the buildings is used and maintained by the residential tenant. Mr. Arms is concerned about the waiver if one of the lots is sold in the future.
 - Point #15 – there is existing wall mounted lighting.
 - Point #16 – to meet the requirement the applicant would need to reduce the number of parking spots but they would like it to remain the same. There is a

visible green buffer of grass between the driveway of the residential tenant and the parking area of the commercial tenant.

- Point #17 / Point #18 (Zoning) – applicant would like to classify the use as existing non-conforming. The commercial property was a church and Mr. Garner believes there was a variance granted for the church to be used as a commercial business many years ago. Mr. Garner does not believe there is a zoning issue but this will need to be confirmed by the Borough Zoning Officer.
- All other points have been marked as “will comply”.
- Mrs. Youmans requested to make an addition to the review letter:
 - The Borough Ordinance calls for parking to be 10 feet from the property line and the plan does not meet this requirement. May need verification that there is sufficient parking available for both lots to meet the Zoning Ordinance.
 - Per Mr. Hoagland, 14 spaces are required and there are currently 19 spaces there.
- Additional Discussion:
 - Mr. Arms is concerned about the buildings being too close to one another should one of the lots be sold in the future. The new owner may have issues with that.
 - Mrs. Youmans asked if the patio could be removed. Mr. Hoagland stated that both current tenants want things to remain as is and the property owner hopes to sell the lots to the current tenants.
 - Ms. Penrod is also concerned about affecting new owners in the future if the Commission does not stick to the current Ordinances.
 - Mr. Hydier questioned who the patio belongs to that holds the HVAC system and the trash can storage. Per Mr. Hoagland and Mr. Exley that belongs to the commercial tenant.
 - It was stated that there is an easement agreement between the tenants. Per Mr. Garner, that language will need to be worked into the deed.
- Montgomery County Planning Commission review letter dated March 19, 2018:
 - Per Mr. Olszak, the points in his letter have already been addressed in the discussion of the Cedarville Engineering letter and the additional comments made throughout the meeting.
- Recommended approval of waivers in accordance with The Crossroads Group waiver letter dated April 12, 2018. Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Arms seconded. Motion carried.
- Recommended preliminary final approval with conditions. Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Arms seconded. Motion carried.
 - Conditions include:
 - Execution of the easement agreement to be reviewed by the Borough Solicitor.
 - Zoning issues to be reviewed by the Borough Zoning Officer.
 - Meet the conditions of the Cedarville Engineering and Montgomery County Planning Commission review letters.

300 Cherry St, land development: To acknowledge receipt only at this time. Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Derr seconded. Motion carried. To be heard at the May 16, 2018 meeting.

Public Comments: None.

Blighted Property Committee: There was a review of the April 18, 2018 Blighted Property Committee meeting. The following properties were discussed and the motion that was made was to

approve each property to be blighted and to authorize the Borough Licensing & Inspections Department to send violation notices to the property owners:

- 674 Walnut St – Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Derr seconded. Mr. Arms abstained. Motion carried.
- 653 Beech St – this property is owned by Commission member Mr. Hydier. He recently received a notice from the Licensing & Inspections Department regarding issues at this property but it was explained that this was outside of the Blighted Property Ordinance and was the result of a complaint received by that office. Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Derr seconded. Mr. Hydier abstained. Motion carried.
- 306 N Evans St – Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Derr seconded. Mr. Arms abstained. Motion carried.
- 652 Spruce St – placed on hold for review by Commission.

There was a discussion about 527 Beech St. This property has already resolved to be blighted. The Licensing & Inspections Department has sent notices with no response. A motion was made to certify this property as blight. Mr. Weand motioned, Mr. Arms seconded. Mr. Derr abstained. Motion carried. The next Blighted Property Committee meeting is to be held on Wednesday, June 20, 2018 at 4:00pm and will be a bus tour. All members are invited to attend.

Pottstown Regional Planning: Mr. Olszak discussed the last meeting of Pottstown Regional Planning. The Regional Recreation Coordinator was present at last meeting to give an update on the Tri-County Trail Study. Maps were present at the Commission meeting and those present were encouraged to review them before they left. There are updates on the Manatawny Trail, Upper West Trail, and Pottsgrove Trail and cost estimates were reviewed for each one. A regional impact review was done for New Hanover Crossing in New Hanover Township which is for 79 single family homes. No issues arose from that discussion so they recommended approval.

Keim Street Bridge comments: Still in preliminary engineering and probably will be for a while. Let date from the PennDOT website is 4/19/18 which is to advertise the bids. A bid would be awarded the following month and work would start in June of 2019. Completion would be April of 2022.

Sustainability Plan update: The Plan has been adopted. No new updates and can be removed from the agenda for following meetings.

New business: Frank McLaughlin was present concerning the lots he purchased on Keim St. He has met with the Zoning Officer and wants to consolidate from five lots into one and create a Homeowners Association. He presented a concept plan to the Commission for eight units, approximately 1,000 square feet each. Possible parking issues were discussed but according to Mr. McLaughlin, there is an abandoned alley in the rear. A variance may be required for zero side yard and he may need multiple variances. Per Ms. Penrod, the Commission has nothing to add at this time, the preliminary information is good but they cannot give any recommendations on a concept plan and will await the submission of an application. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he feels the concept may be more aggressive than the Zoning Ordinance will allow.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.